



Fayetteville VA Medical Center *Community Update*

Vol. 2 No. 5

Items of interest for our stakeholders

May/June 2011

History: New dialysis center first in VA

History was made May 18 with the quick snip of a blue ribbon.

U.S. Rep. Mike McIntyre, Mid-Atlantic Health Care Network Director Daniel Hoffmann and Fayetteville VA Medical Center Director Elizabeth Goolsby cut the ribbon officially opening the new VA Dialysis Center at Fayetteville. The center is the first free-standing dialysis clinic – as opposed to clinics located in medical centers – in VA history.

The Fayetteville clinic is the first of four that are scheduled to open around the country this year under a special program. Other clinics will be located in Raleigh, Philadelphia and Cleveland, with the ribbon cutting scheduled for the Raleigh clinic June 1.

The dialysis clinic, located at 2301 Robeson Street in Fayetteville, is a 16-chair unit that will eventually treat up to 64 Veterans each week. It also has 12 examination rooms that will be used to see Veterans who need Compensation and Pension exams, which are part of the Veterans disability claims process.

The first patients are scheduled to begin dialysis treatments June 6 after final testing of all equipment is completed.

Dialysis removes wastes and water from the blood of patients with kidney failure using an artificial kidney. There are almost 200 Veterans receiving dialysis treatments through the Fayetteville VA Medical Center. North Carolina is in an area considered part of the “Kidney Disease Belt,” an area that experiences a higher rate of kidney disease than any other part of the country, said Dr. Manpreet Bhutani, dialysis center medical director.

“It’s because of our diet in the



Fayetteville VAMC Director Elizabeth Goolsby, U.S. Rep. Mike McIntyre and Mid-Atlantic Health Care Network Director Daniel Hoffmann cut the ribbon dedicating the new VA Dialysis Center at Fayetteville. The center is the first free-standing dialysis clinic in the VA.

Photo by Brad Garner

Goolsby said.

U.S. Rep. Mike McIntyre and VA Mid-Atlantic Health Care Network Director Daniel Hoffmann assisted with the ribbon cutting ceremony and tour the new facility immediately after. Both said the center was sorely needed.

“Several years ago, it became apparent that there was a growing need for dialysis among Veterans in North Carolina,” Hoffmann said. “Responding to that need, VA focused on building internal capacity to provide dialysis by authorizing four stand alone clinics: this one, one in Raleigh, one in Cleveland and one in Philadelphia.

south,” Bhutani explained. “We have a lot of sodium in our diet, and that leads to strokes, heart attacks and kidney failure. If your brain stops working, you die. If your heart stops working, you die. But if your kidneys fail, we can keep you alive using dialysis.” In light of this, the Dialysis Center is a valuable addition to the community that helps increase access to high quality health care for area Veterans, said Fayetteville VAMC Director Elizabeth Goolsby. “This is a state of the art facility that is a wonderful addition to the services we already provide for more than 47,000 Veterans in North and South Carolina,”

“Increasing our own internal capacity to provide outpatient chronic dialysis will provide Veterans this life-saving treatment in a more comprehensive environment, integrated with the other care they receive from VA,” Hoffmann said. “Specifically, this new state-of-the-art clinic will provide 64 Veterans the best care anywhere.”

**Fayetteville
VA Medical Center
Priorities**

**Access
to Care
Employer of
Choice
Good Stewards of our
Resources**

VA identifies contractor for new Wilmington clinic

The Department of Veterans Affairs awarded a lease contract for a new community based outpatient clinic (CBOC) in Wilmington, N.C., on March 31.

The new clinic will provide Veterans living in southeastern North Carolina expanded services in a larger, state-of-the-art clinic. Along with primary care and mental health services, this new clinic will also provide specialty services including optometry, audiology, podiatry, and neurology.

This 80,761 net usable square feet (NUSF) (99,933 rentable square feet) clinic will replace the existing clinic (9,564 NUSF) when it opens in 2013. The current clinic has reached its physical capacity for the current services provided for Veterans in the area. Additional space is necessary to support the ancillary and specialty services of this population of Veterans as well as to meet projected future VA enrollment.

Summit Smith Healthcare Facilities of Milwaukee, Wis., met all requirements and provided the offer most advantageous to the government. The annual rent will be \$2,971,197 for the 20-year lease term, with a special purpose, medically-related build out lump-sum payment of \$928,384. The new CBOC will be sited on the same 19 acres of Wilmington Airport land that was identified in the original contract, which was previously terminated for default.

Highlights of the new CBOC include:

- Almost eight times the clinical space of the previous location
- Expanded services for Veterans, including mental health, social work, women's health and telehealth
- A modern state-of-the-art environment for Veterans to receive health care
- A location more central to the Veterans in the catchment area, improving access and convenience
- Expanded parking for Veterans (400+ parking spaces)



Community Update is published monthly. The contents provide readers with information on programs and happenings at the Fayetteville VA Medical Center.

If you have questions or comments about the newsletter, email edward.drohan@va.gov or call (910) 488-2120, ext. 5991.

Elizabeth Goolsby	Director
James Galkowski	Associate Director
Joyce Alexander-Hines	Associate Director, Patient Care Service
Dr. Anna Teague	Interim Chief of Staff
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Brunswick County clinic lease signed

A lease has been signed for the new Brunswick County VA clinic and operations are scheduled to begin the first week of August.

The clinic will be located at 20 Medical Center Drive, Unit 106, Brunswick Medical Center in Supply, N.C. The Fayetteville VAMC will assume possession of the new site on June 1. In early July, the VA will send letters to patients who live near the clinic asking if they want to transfer to the new clinic.

The clinic will see patients 4 days a week from 7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. and services provided will be done in 3 phases.

Phase 1 will consist of a clinic team with a provider, registered nurse, licensed practical nurse and a medical administrator. Video conferencing mental health services will also be available.

Phase 2 will provide specialty services one day a week and will most likely include an infectious disease clinic, (once a month) minor procedure clinic (once a month initially), spinal cord injuries (once a month) and women's health (once a month initially).

Phase 3 will start the recruitment for a second team once 1,000 to 1,100 patients have been enrolled in the first clinical team.

In the event that a veteran needs additional medical attention outside the scope of the Brunswick Outreach Clinic, transportation will be provided to Wilmington by the VA. Three vans have been made available with a special VA logo and will serve those veterans who may need transportation to Wilmington or the Fayetteville VAMC.

"We are extremely pleased that the Brunswick County Outreach Clinic is one step closer to reality," said Fayetteville VAMC Director Elizabeth Goolsby. "This new facility will greatly increase access to high quality health care for veterans in the area."

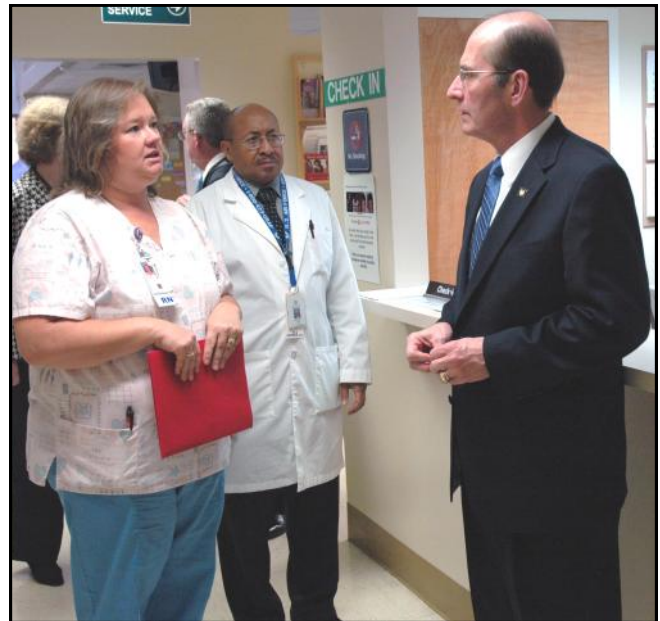
U.S. Rep. Mike McIntyre echoed that sentiment.

"Today, we take a huge step forward to the reality of a new veterans' clinic in Brunswick County," McIntyre said. "This new clinic will provide valuable services to the veterans population and honor their commitment and service to our nation. I am thrilled to be able to help our veterans' right here at home. I am very thankful to the VA, Brunswick County VA Service Officer Anita Hartsell, the Brunswick County Veterans Council, and all the veterans who have worked with us to make this dream a reality."

Around the Fayetteville VAMC

Volunteer Awards

Fayetteville VAMC honored those who give their time here on April 22. James Flanders received a special award from Voluntary Service Chief Norma Fraser and Medical Center Director Elizabeth Goolsby for donating more than 17,500 hours since 1979.



**VA
VIP
Visits** VA Chief of Staff John R. Gingrich talks with Nurse Manager Clell Penney and Dr. Wilbert Cain during his April 18 visit to the Jacksonville Community Based Outpatient Clinic and Camp Lejeune.



Thank you

Associate Director for Patient Care Services Joyce Alexander-Hines presents Home Depot Department Manager Carmina Precie with a plaque April 13 thanking the store for donating bottled water during a recent water outage.



Free meals

Volunteers Troy Oates, Delphine Roberts and Kathy Smith prepare to distribute 250 spaghetti meals donated by workers at the Goodyear plant in Fayetteville April 15. The dinners were given to Veterans throughout the facility.

Photos by Ed Drohan



Disaster Relief

The Disabled American Veterans brought their mobile service office to Fayetteville and Jacksonville April 25 and 26 to pass out disaster relief grants to Veterans affected by tornadoes that ravaged North Carolina on April 16.

Going green brings national recognition for FVAMC employee

A Fayetteville VAMC employee is receiving national recognition for her efforts in helping a 70-year-old building "go green."

Shelley Reeder, the medical center's Green Environmental Management Systems (GEM) coordinator, has been selected to receive the 2011 VA Sustainability Achievement Award. The award provides Department-level recognition to VA employees and facilities who have demonstrated outstanding environmental stewardship and whose efforts have resulted in significant contributions to the environment. She has been invited to Washington, D.C., in May to accept the award.

Reeder has been with the Fayetteville VAMC for seven years, coming to Fayetteville from the Charleston, S.C., Naval Hospital where she worked as an industrial hygienist for 18 years. Starting here in the same position, she moved into the GEMS coordinator position five years ago when VA created environmental coordinator positions at each medical center. Reeder said she was already working with the environmental program as an industrial hygienist, so the move was a natural.

"In IH, I worked with all the occupational health hazards in the workplace – noise, chemicals, radiation and lead exposure among others," Reeder said. "We worked (in IH) to minimize exposure to hazards in the workplace. We were looking out for people, and now we're looking out for the environment."

She received the award for her part in developing and leading a project that cleaned about 400 fan coil units around the facility and replaced outdated air filter systems with modern antimicrobial filters. The project not only increased the air quality in the hospital, but also decreased energy consumption, saving the VA about \$154,000 a year.

Fan coils are wall mounted heating and air conditioning units that were originally installed in the 1960s, Reeder said. Facility upgrades and additions since have moved that function to centralized air handling units, but the older systems still must be used and maintained.

Reeder started a pilot project in December 2009 with 10 fan coil units. When the results proved the project had merit, the GEMS committee approved expanding the project throughout the hospital. In less than two weeks, the project was completed at a cost of \$81,000, a cost that was repaid in energy savings alone in the first five to seven months.

The project has also helped reduce the amount of greenhouse

gases emitted by medical center operations by 1,920 tons, thus reducing the hospital's carbon footprint, Reeder explained.

There were other benefits to the project as well. Air temperatures coming from individual fan coil units were as much as 26 percent hotter or colder than before the project. Installing high efficiency antimicrobial filters also reduced particulates in patient care areas by as much as 90 percent, helping eliminate odors creating a more pleasant and safer environment for both patients and staff members.

As part of the initial investment, the Fayetteville VAMC also received a cleaning machine that is now used by two staff members who were trained by the original contractor, Reeder said. Because the newer system is more efficient, that cleaning

now only needs to be done once a year.

Reeder said the difference in the hospital after the project was completed was noticeable. "We had a lot of positive feedback from people who said they could tell the difference," Reeder said. "We got emails from people saying the air smelled cleaner and their eyes weren't itchy anymore. They were ecstatic that we were doing something with the fan coil units."

One requirement for the award was that the project could be duplicated at other facilities,

Reeder said. She briefed the Mid-Atlantic Health Care Network GEMS coordinators about the success at Fayetteville, and now the Salisbury, N.C., VAMC is conducting a fan coil cleaning project of their own.

Reeder said she was surprised but excited when she learned about the award, which has other less tangible benefits.

"The Veterans see us taking steps to green our facility," Reeder said. "Even though it's old, there are still things we can do."

Reeder isn't sitting still, though. She said there were several other energy projects underway, including a project to wrap steam pipes in the facility in thermal blankets to reduce heat loss through the pipe walls over the length of the pipe run.

"People think of me as the recycling person, but there's so much more here than that," Reeder said.

Fayetteville VAMC Director Elizabeth Goolsby personally congratulated Reeder for her leadership in the project.

"We do have an older facility, but with people like Shelley here finding ways to make it more efficient, we'll be able to continue providing quality health care to our Nation's heroes for many years to come," Goolsby said. "This award is well deserved."



Shelley Reeder, Fayetteville VAMC Green Environmental Management Systems coordinator, explains environmental efforts taking place at the hospital to a Veteran during the April 19 Earth Day Celebration. Reeder has been selected to receive the 2011 VA Sustainability Award.
Photo by Ed Drohan

Pardon our dust

Construction sound of progress for FVAMC

The sound of progress and improvement can be heard throughout the Fayetteville VA Medical Center. For those who may not have heard it, it sounds an awful lot like hammers, power tools and other heavy equipment.

Construction projects are ongoing throughout the medical center, projects that – when completed – will make the facility a better place for patients, employees and visitors. Unfortunately, that also means some short-term inconveniences like increased noise and temporarily moved clinics.

“This facility is more than 70 years old, and that means we

have to work that much harder to keep it in top condition for our Veterans,” said Fayetteville VAMC Director Elizabeth Goolsby. “We’ve been very fortunate to get funding for projects that will upgrade our infrastructure and patient care areas so we can continue to provide Veterans access to high quality health care while at the same time maintaining good stewardship of our resources.”

Some of the projects are very visible, while others are happening in areas most visitors and staff members rarely see. Some of the more visible projects are:

- **A-Wing and Main Elevator upgrades.** These projects are ongoing with one or more elevator cars from each bank out of service while workers renovate them. One elevator car in A-Wing has been completed, and the total project is scheduled for completion by mid-December.
- **Emergency Department renovation.** This project will enlarge the patient area for the Emergency Department from five to 10 beds to allow more patients to be treated at any given time. The Emergency Room has been relocated across the hall, and the project is scheduled for completion by March 2012.
- **Women Veterans Health Clinic renovation.** When completed, the new Women’s Pavilion will allow for better patient flow and will address privacy issues that were inherent in the old area. The clinic has been tem-

porarily relocated to the old Tango Clinic area in the basement while construction is ongoing, but the new pavilion is scheduled to open on the second floor by October.

- **Food and Nutrition Kitchen upgrade.** Temporary kitchen trailers are being used while work is being done to renovate heating, ventilation and air conditioning, as well as equipment in the facility’s current kitchen. This project is expected to continue until March 2012.
- **Ward 5C upgrade.** Construction has started on the

fifth floor of the main building to convert the area into the new mental health inpatient unit. When completed in March 2012, the current mental health unit in Ward 4C will relocate to the renovated area.

- **Handrail replacement.** Handrails along the walls in several areas of



the hospital either have been or soon will be replaced with newer models.

The kitchen and Women’s Pavilion projects were funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, also known as stimulus funds.

There are also larger projects in the works for facilities outside the main campus. Construction will begin in a few months on a new community based outpatient clinic in Wilmington that – when completed in fiscal year 2013 – will be more than eight times the size of the current facility.

Site selection is also underway for a new 250,000 square foot Health Care Center in Cumberland County that will house most of the Fayetteville VAMC’s outpatient activities beginning in fiscal year 2014.

“We know that construction can be a major inconvenience, especially when you have as much going on as we do here,” Goolsby said. “The good thing is it’s only a temporary inconvenience and this facility will be much better able to meet the needs of our Veterans and our staff when it’s completed. I just ask that we all bear with it while we look forward to better things in the near future.”

Do I need to go to the EMERGENCY ROOM?

YES, if you —

- Have chest pain that lasts at least 10 minutes
- Have bleeding that continues for 10 minutes
- Have sudden, severe or unrelieved pain
- Are coughing or vomiting blood
- Have trouble breathing or shortness of breath
- Experience sudden dizziness or weakness
- Experience a sudden change in or loss of vision
- Experience a sudden change in mental status, such as loss of consciousness
- Have severe or persistent vomiting or diarrhea
- Have thoughts of harming yourself or others

NO, if you —

- Need a prescription refill — please check in at your Primary Care Clinic
- Are already under treatment for a chronic condition such as lower back pain — please check in at your Primary Care Clinic
- Are suffering from a common malady (e.g. a cold) and can wait until the next day to see your Primary Care provider

Unnecessary visits to the Emergency Room cause long waits and delays in service for everybody involved. Primary Care Clinics have time slots available for walk-ins for cases that don't need an Emergency Room Visit.

Please help us help you — see your Primary Care provider first!

**Please share this information
with your fellow Veterans**

**If you would like to receive this
newsletter by email,
please send an email
to Ed Drohan,
Public Affairs Officer, at
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**Please include your name,
post or chapter number if
applicable, and email address**



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